CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS
Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University
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Fact sheet

WOMEN IN MUNICIPAL OFFICE

In 1985, in the states for which data are available, women comprised **14.3%** of mayors and municipal council members.[1] There were **14,672** women elected to these posts out of a total of 102,329 officials. This represents a 260% increase in the decade since 1975, when women held only 4,080 of all such positions.

The **highest percentages** of women elected to municipal office were found in the District of Columbia (50%) and Hawaii (30%), each of which has only one incorporated municipality.[2] Of the states with a substantial number of available positions, Michigan ranked highest with 27.5% women among its elected municipal officials.[3] After the District of Columbia and Hawaii, the ten states with the highest proportions of women in municipal office (mayors and council members combined) were:

State	% of Women in Municipal Office	State	% of Women in Municipal Office
Michigan	27.5	Wyoming	17.8
Alaska	23.1	California	17.8
Oregon	22.2	Arizona	17.6
Washington	19.3	Delaware	17.5
Connecticut	18.7	Ohio	16.5

Among the top ranking states in 1985, five also ranked among the top ten in the proportion of women in their state legislatures, while four ranked among the top ten in the proportion of women on their county governing boards:[4]

State	% of Women State Legislators	Rank	State	% of Women on County Governing Boards	Rank
WY	25.6	3	AK	36.5	1
WA	23.8	5	HI	24.0	2
CT	21.9	7	CA	21.6	3
AZ	20.0	8	AZ	20.9	4
OR	20.0	9			

According to the Joint Center for Political Studies, 40 **black women** were serving as mayors in January of 1986, constituting 13.8% of all black mayors nationwide. Black women held 491 municipal council seats, accounting for 17.1% of all such seats held by black officials in 1986; this is more than four times the 1975 figure of 4%. Black female and male municipal officials hold only a small proportion of all municipal offices, and it is estimated that black women constitute less than 1% of all elected municipal positions.[5]

Among the twenty-five women serving in the **U.S. Congress** in 1987 (two in the Senate and twenty-three in the House) four previously served on municipal councils. They are: Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD); and Representatives Barbara Kennelly (D-CT), Jan Meyers (R-KS), and Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH).

In June 1987, among members of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, 92 women serve as mayors in cities with populations over 30,000.[6] Among the **100 largest cities** in the U.S. in 1987, eleven have women mayors -- including three in the ten largest cities:

Rank by Population[7]	City	Name	Party*	Year Took Office
4	Houston, TX	**Kathy Whitmire**	D	1982
7	Dallas, TX	**Annette Strauss**	NP	1987
8	San Diego, CA	**Maureen O'Connor**	NP	1986
12	San Francisco, CA	**Dianne Feinstein**	D	1978
44	Toledo, OH	**Donna Owens**	R	1984
50	Sacramento, CA	**Anne Rudin**	NP	1983
55	Tampa, FL	**Sandra Freedman**	NP	1986
58	Corpus Christi, TX	**Betty Turner**	NP	1987
88	Spokane, WA	**Vicki McNeill**	NP	1986
89	Stockton, CA	**Barbara Fass**	NP	1985
91	Little Rock, AR	**Lottie Shackelford**	NP	1987

* NP indicates mayoral election is nonpartisan.

Past women mayors elected to serve among the 100 largest cities have included:

City	Name	Party*	Years Served
Austin, TX	Carole McClellan	D	1977-1983
Chicago, IL	Jane Byrne	D	1979-1983
Cincinnati, OH	Bobbie Stern	NP	1975-76/78-79
Hartford, CT	Ann Uccello	R	1967-1971
Honolulu, HI	Eileen Anderson	D	1981-1985
Huntington Beach, CA	Norma B. Gibbs	R	1975-1976
	Ruth Bailey	R	1984-1985
Lincoln, NE	Helen Boosalis	D	1975-1983
Long Beach, CA	Eunice Sato	R	1980-1982
Oklahoma City, OK	Patience Latting	D	1971-1983
Phoenix, AZ	Margaret Hance	R	1974-76/78-80
Portland, OR	Dorothy Lee	R	1949-1952
Sacramento, CA	Belle Cooledge	NP	1948-1949
St. Petersburg, FL	Corinne Freeman	R	1978-1985
San Antonio, TX	Lila Cockrell	D	1975-1981
San Jose, CA	Janet Gray Hayes	D	1974-1982
Worcester, MA	Sara Robertson	D	1982-1983

*NP indicates mayoral election is nonpartisan.

The first woman mayor in the United States was Susanna Salter of Argonia, KS, elected in 1887. Seattle, WA, was the first major city to elect a woman mayor. Bertha K. Landes, who had served as president of the city council, was elected mayor of Seattle in 1926. The first black woman to head a city with a population over 100,000 was Loretta Glickman, chosen as mayor of Pasadena, CA in 1982. The largest U.S. city yet to elect a woman mayor is Chicago, IL, where Jane Byrne (D) served from 1979-1983.

Women have presided over both major national organizations of municipal officials. In 1977, former Seattle City Council President Phyllis Lamphere, and in 1980, then Newport News, VA City Councilwoman Jessie Rattley, served as president of the National League of Cities. During 1981 and 1982, Helen Boosalis, then mayor of Lincoln, NE became the first woman president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Data from a 1981 Center for the American Woman and Politics survey of women in elected office show:

- Women mayors and council members are most frequently between the ages of 40 and 59.
- More than half of all women mayors and council members hold jobs outside of the home at the same time they are serving in office.
- Most women mayors and council members who list occupations outside the home are in professional/technical or clerical/secretarial fields. More than 10% of the women municipal officials are elementary or secondary school teachers, by far the most common single occupation listed by the women.
- More than half of all women mayors and council members have had at least some college education.
- More than 3/4 of all women mayors and council members are currently married, and of those, almost all report that their husbands are supportive of their political careers.
- Fewer than half of all women mayors and council members have children younger than 12 years old.

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1. Includes data from the District of Columbia. Complete data are not available for the following states: IL; IN; KY; MO; PA; WI.
2. Other states with fewer than 100 incorporated municipalities: NV, 17; RI, 39; DE, 56; AZ, 76; WY, 91; NM, 96.
3. Michigan is the only state in which clerks and treasurers are included in these figures. They are elected ex officio to the councils and vote on policy matters before those bodies
4. There is no county commissioner equivalent in CT, VT, or RI.
5. Because different data collection methods are used and different states are included in CAWP and Joint Center figures, it is not possible to calculate the percentage of all women municipal officials who are black.
6. Information on women mayors serving in 1987 is from the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which includes the mayors of most U.S. cities with populations over 30,000. Membership cities with populations under 30,000 were not included.
7. According to 1984 data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

WOMEN MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBERS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN 1975 AND 1985

	Number of Women Mayors and Municipal Council Members		Percentage of Women (Rank Among States)		Percentage Increase from 1975 to 1985
STATE	1975	1985	1985		
AL	85	281	11.0	(33)	230
AK	35	233	23.1	(2)	566
AZ	39	87	17.6	(8)	123
AR	160	365	11.9	(28)	128
CA	220	465	17.8	(7)	111
CO	170	315	16.5	(11)	85
CT	130	240	18.7	(5)	85
DE	22	57	17.5	(9)	159
DC	3	7	50.0	(+)	*
FL	174	311	13.3	(79)	19
GA	77	251	7.8	(40)	226
HI	1	3	30.0	(+)	*
ID	45	141	13.2	(21)	213
IL	----------		----	NA ----	----
IN	----------		----	NA ----	----
IA	304	732	12.9	(22)	141
KS	165	445	11.9	(29)	170
KY	----------		----	NA ----	----
LA	65	183	11.7	(30)	182
ME	87	243	10.4	(36)	179
MD	59	133	15.2	(14)	125
MA	48	217	11.3	(32)	352
MI	*	2,779	27.5	(1)	*
MN	227	542	12.8	(25)	139
MS	82	176	10.5	(35)	115
MO	----------		----	NA ----	----
MT	57	110	14.4	(15)	93
NE	83	241	7.6	(41)	190
NV	2	15	16.1	(13)	*
NH	39	113	10.7	(34)	190
NJ	213	451	13.2	(20)	112
NM	33	86	16.3	(12)	161
NY	*	797	14.4	(17)	*
NC	141	337	12.2	(26)	139
ND	69	174	8.5	(39)	152
OH	*	1,129	16.5	(10)	*
OK	92	312	10.2	(37)	239
OR	175	344	22.2	(3)	97
PA	----------		----	NA ----	----
RI	21	30	12.8	(24)	43
SC	72	184	12.2	(27)	156
SD	50	149	8.9	(38)	198
TN	50	144	7.1	(42)	188
TX	277	786	12.8	(23)	184
UT	40	137	11.5	(31)	243
VT	44	87	6.3	(43)	98
VA	117	211	13.3	(18)	80
WA	153	341	19.3	(4)	123
WV	120	202	13.6	(16)	68
WI	----------		----	NA ----	----
WY	34	86	17.8	(6)	153
NATIONAL	**4,080**	**14,672**	**14.3**		**260%**

*The number is too small or 1975 and 1985 data are based on different assumptions so comparisons are invalid.

+The District of Columbia and Hawaii are not ranked because each has only one incorporated municipality.

In using data from our fact sheets, please credit the National Information Bank on Women in Public Office (NIB), a project of the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP). Additional information drawn from: CAWP research on "Bringing More Women into Public Office," conducted under a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation; U.S. Census Bureau; state and local directories; Joint Center for Political Studies; National Women's Political Caucus; U.S. Conference of Mayors; National League of Cities; Women in American Politics by Martin Gruberg (Academia Press, Oshkosh, WI, 1968).

Further technical information on this data is available from CAWP.

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WOMEN IN STATEWIDE ELECTIVE EXECUTIVE OFFICES 1987

In 1987, women hold **43**, or **14.6%**, of the 295 top executive statewide elective offices across the country.* Of the 43 women currently serving, 34 are Democrats and 9 are Republicans. Women hold statewide elective executive offices in 30 states.

In the past ten years, the number of women elected statewide to top executive positions has almost doubled; 22 of all such positions were held by women in 1977 as compared to 43 in 1987. Women have been elected statewide to top executive offices in 40 of the nation's 50 states. In Maine, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, the governor is the only executive elected statewide, and a woman has never served as governor in these three states. The other seven states where women have never been elected statewide to executive posts are: Alaska, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina, Utah, and West Virginia.

GOVERNORS

Three women serve as governors in 1987: **Martha Layne Collins**, a Kentucky Democrat elected in 1983; **Madeleine Kunin**, a Vermont Democrat elected in 1984 and re-elected in 1986; and **Kay Orr**, a Nebraska Republican elected in 1986. Orr is the first Republican woman governor in the nation and is the only woman to have run against another woman for a gubernatorial position.

Collins, Kunin, and Orr, all of whom were elected in their own right, make up the largest number of women to serve simultaneously as governors. They bring to eight (seven Democrats and one Republican) the total number of women ever to serve as governors.

The first woman governor was Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming. Elected to replace her deceased husband, Ross served from 1925 to 1927. Miriam "Ma" Ferguson, inaugurated as governor of Texas fifteen days after Ross' Wyoming inauguration, served from 1925 to 1927 and again from 1933 to 1935. Both Lurleen Wallace of Alabama, who served from 1967 to 1968, and Ferguson were elected as surrogates for their husbands who could not run for re-election. Ella Grasso of Connecticut was the first woman governor elected in her own right. She was elected in 1974 and re-elected to a second four-year term in 1978, but stepped down for health reasons in December of 1980. Dixy Lee Ray of Washington was the second woman governor elected in her own right. Elected in 1976, Ray served from 1977 to 1981.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS

Five women currently serve as lieutenant governors among the 42 states with such positions. They are: **Martha Griffiths** (D-MI) and **Marlene Johnson** (DFL-MN), elected in 1982 and re-elected in 1986; **Harriet Woods** (D-MO), elected in 1984; and **Evelyn Murphy** (D-MA) and **Jo Ann Zimmerman** (D-IA), elected in 1986. Ruth Meiers (D-ND), elected in 1984 to a four-year term, died in office in 1987.

The first woman to be elected as lieutenant governor was Consuelo Bailey, a Vermont Republican elected in 1955. Bailey had previously served as Speaker of the state House of Representatives; thus, as lieutenant governor, she became the only woman in the country to have presided over both chambers of a state legislature.

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*These numbers do not include: women appointed to state cabinet-level positions, women elected by the legislature, or women in the judiciary. For further information on women appointed to state cabinets, please see CAWP's fact sheet on women appointees.

In using data from our fact sheets, please credit the National Information Bank on Women in Public Office (NIB), a service of the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Additional information from Martin Gruberg's Women in American Politics (Oshkosh, Wisconsin: Academic Press, 1968).

OTHER STATEWIDE ELECTIVE EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

In addition to three women governors and five women lieutenant governors, there are 35 women serving in top executive statewide elective positions. They are:

SECRETARY OF STATE - 12

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
AZ	Rose Mofford	D	I
CA	March Fong Eu	D	I
CO	Natalie Meyer	R	I
CT	Julia Tashjian	D	I
IA	Elaine Baxter	D	O
MN	Joan Growe	DFL	I
NV	Frankie Sue Del Papa	D	O
NM	Rebecca Vigil-Giron	D	O
OR	Barbara Roberts	D	H
RI	Kathleen Connell	D	O
SD	Joyce Hazeltine	R	O
WY	Kathy Karpan	D	O

ATTORNEY GENERAL - 1

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
VA	Mary Sue Terry	D	H

STATE TREASURER - 9

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
AR	Jimmie Lou Fisher	D	I
CO	Gail Schoettler	D	O
DE	Janet Rzewnicki	R	I
ID	Lydia Justice Edwards	R	O
IN	Marjorie O'Laughlin	R	O
KS	Joan Finney	D	I
KY	Frances Jones Mills	D	H
OH	Mary Ellen Withrow	D	I
TX	Ann Richards	D	I

STATE AUDITOR - 6

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
AL	Jan Cook	D	I
AR	Julia Hughes Jones	D	I
IN	Ann DeVore	R	C
KY	Mary Ann Tobin	D	H
MO	Margaret Kelly	R	I
MT	Andrea Bennett	R	H

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION - 1

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
FL	Betty Castor	D	O

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - 3

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
AZ	C. Diane Bishop	D	O
KY	Alice McDonald	D	H
WY	Lynn Simons	D	I

COMMISSIONER OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES - 1

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
OR	Mary Roberts	D	I

CORPORATION COMMISSIONER - 2

State	Name	Party	Status[+]
AZ	Marcia Weeks	D	H
OK	Norma Eagleton	D	H

1986 STATEWIDE RACES -- CANDIDATES AND ELECTIONS

In the 1986 general election, 67 women (39 Democrats and 28 Republicans) ran for top statewide elective executive offices in 31 states. A record number of women ran for governor, with eight women running as major party candidates. In addition, eleven women ran for lieutenant governor, twenty-one for secretary of state, one for attorney general, eleven for state treasurer, six for state auditor, one for comptroller, one for commissioner of education, three for superintendent of public instruction, one for commissioner of the bureau of labor and industries, two for corporation commissioner, and one for public service commissioner.

Of the 67 women who ran -- 20 incumbents, 15 challengers, and 32 in open seats -- 33 won their races. Eleven of the 33 winners had faced women opponents in the general election. Of the 33 candidates who won -- 18 incumbents, 1 challenger, and 14 in open seats -- 25 were Democrats and 8 were Republicans. In addition to the 33 women elected in 1986, 10* women (nine Democrats and one Republican) serving in top executive positions hold offices which were not up for re-election in 1986.

[+]In the 1986 general election: I = candidate was an incumbent; C = candidate was a challenger; O = candidate ran for an open seat; H = holdover (officeholder was not up for re-election in 1986).

*This number does not include Ruth Meiers (D), lieutenant governor of North Dakota, who died in office or Mary Evelyn Parker (D), state treasurer of Louisianna, who retired in 1987.

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WOMEN ON COUNTY GOVERNING BOARDS 1987

In 1987 women hold **8.6%** of all seats on county governing boards.[1] 1594 of the 18,474 county governing board members serving in 1987 are women. Since 1975, the number of women elected to county governing boards has more than tripled.

Year	Women Board Members	% of Women on County Boards
1975	451	2.8
1977	656	4.0
1979	947	5.3
1981	1128	6.2
1983	1427	7.8
1984	1476	8.0
1987	**1594**	**8.6**

Of the ten states with the greatest proportion of women serving on county governing boards, five (HI, NH, AK, NV, AZ) have fewer than 70 total positions on their governing boards.[2] (This means that a relatively small number of women results in a high percentage.)

The ten states with the **highest percentages** of women county board members are:

State	% Women	State	% Women
Hawaii	27.3	Michigan	17.3
New Hampshire	26.7	Nevada	17.0
California	21.7	Arizona	16.4
Alaska	19.1	New Mexico	15.7
Maryland	17.8	Florida	14.3

The ten states with the **lowest percentages** of women county board members are:

State	% Women	State	% Women
Mississippi	2.0	Louisiana	2.8
Alabama	2.0	Kentucky	3.0
Oklahoma	2.2	Georgia	3.4
Utah	2.3	Indiana	3.5
Texas	2.7	Missouri	4.7

In 1987, every state has at least two women serving on its county governing boards.

According to the Joint Center for Political Studies, 65 **black women** in twenty states serve on county governing bodies in 1987. Black women hold 10.2% (65 out of 640) of all such seats held by blacks.[3]

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[1]There is no county commissioner equivalent in Connecticut, Rhode Island, or Vermont. In three states (California, Illinois, and Pennsylvania) the latest available data are from 1986.

[2]Other states with fewer than 70 total positions on county governing boards are: Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Utah, and Wyoming.

[3]Because different data collection methods are used and different states are included in CAWP and Joint Center figures, it is not possible to calculate the percentage of all female county governing board officials who are black.

In using data from our fact sheets, please credit the National Information Bank on Women in Public Office (NIB), a service of the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Additional information from state and county directories and the Joint Center for Political Studies.

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WOMEN COUNTY GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS:

A COMPARISON BETWEEN 1987 AND 1981*

	1987**				1981			
State	Rank	Number of Women	Total Number of Positions	Percentage of Women	Rank	Number of Women	Total Number of Positions	Percentage of Women
AL	46	7	348	2.0	39	9	272	3.3
AK	4	13	68	19.1	2	12	63	19.1
AZ	8	9	55	16.4	4	7	43	16.3
AR	24	71	761	9.3	14	64	751	8.5
CA	3	63	291	21.7	3	52	283	18.4
CO	23	18	192	9.4	23	13	185	7.0
CT	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
DE	16+	2	19	10.5	29	3	19	15.8
FL	10	51	358	14.3	9	38	331	11.5
GA	40	22	650	3.4	38	22	587	3.8
HI	1	9	33	27.3	5	4	25	16.0
ID	21	13	132	9.9	30	8	141	5.7
IL	26	134++	1516++	8.8	18	117	1516	7.7
IN	39	10	283	3.5	1	59	283	20.9
IA	22	35	362	9.7	28	25	424	5.9
KS	30	24	313	7.7	22	23	322	7.1
KY	41	17	577	3.0	35	25	591	4.2
LA	42	18	649	2.8	42	20	643	3.1
ME	35	3	48	6.3	19	4	53	7.6
MD	5	21	118	17.8	16	9	111	8.1
MA	31	4	54	7.4	12	5	51	9.8
MI	6	123	711	17.3	6	129	839	15.4
MN	28	37	443	8.4	43	13	439	3.0
MS	47	8	410	2.0	47	8	410	2.0
MO	38	17	364	4.7	27	22	364	6.0
MT	20	18	180	10.0	26	10	168	6.0
NE	33	27	409	6.6	31	22	401	5.5
NV	7	10	59	17.0	25	4	62	6.5
NH	2	8	30	26.7	10	4	35	11.4
NJ	16+	14	133	10.5	8	17	135	12.6
NM	9	17	108	15.7	11	11	102	10.8
NY	12	130	1069	12.2	13	100	1069	9.4
NC	19	51	494	10.3	20	36	485	7.4
ND	37	11	221	5.0	40	7	219	3.2
OH	25	24	264	9.1	24	18	264	6.8
OK	45	5	231	2.2	44	6	231	2.6
OR	13	14	116	12.1	7	17	114	14.9
PA	15	24	214	11.2	15	16	195	8.2
RI	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SC	14	36	309	11.7	21	21	290	7.2
SD	36	16	304	5.3	32	13	281	4.6
TN	34	111	1719	6.5	33	75	1678	4.5
TX	43	27	1020	2.7	45	25	1020	2.5
UT	44	2	87	2.3	41	3	94	3.2
VT	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
VA	27	43	498	8.6	46	12	498	2.4
WA	18	13	124	10.5	17	10	124	8.1
WV	29	13	169	7.7	36	7	169	4.1
WI	11	246	1892	13.0	37	71	1892	3.8
WY	32	5	69	7.3	34	3	69	4.4
TOTALS		1,594	18,474	8.6		1,128	18,341	6.2

+States with same percentage are given same rank.

++Data for the number of women serving are from 100 of 102 counties; the total number of positions listed is from U.S. Census figures for all 102 Illinois counties.

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*There is no county commissioner equivalent in Connecticut, Rhode Island, or Vermont. Data collection methods used in 1987 were different from those used in 1981. In 1987, state and county directories were used to determine the total number of available positions. In 1981, U.S. Census figures were used to determine the total number of available positions.

**In three states (California, Illinois, and Pennsylvania) the latest available data are from 1986.